

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 856

By Kane

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Cory Wells of Three Dog Night.

WHEREAS, this General Assembly was greatly saddened by the passing of Cory Wells, one of the three lead singers of the iconic American pop band Three Dog Night; he had been with Three Dog Night from the very beginning and continued performing with the band until September 2015, when he became ill; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wells first met bandmate Danny Hutton when they were touring with Sonny and Cher in separate acts; after that tour, Mr. Hutton contacted Mr. Wells about forming a group with three lead singers, and Three Dog Night was born; and

WHEREAS, Three Dog Night's eclectic taste, combined with its members' ability to recognize and record hits in a unique, distinctive, and appealing style resulted in the group's dominance of the charts for years and popularized the works of many soon-to-be famous songwriters, including Harry Nilsson, Randy Newman, Elton John, Laura Nyro, Paul Williams, and Hoyt Axton; and

WHEREAS, boasting chart success and record sales that are virtually unmatched in popular music, Three Dog Night had twenty-one consecutive top forty hits, including three number one singles, "Mama Told Me (Not to Come)," "Black and White," and "Joy to the World"; eleven top ten singles; eighteen consecutive top twenty singles; seven million-selling singles; and twelve consecutive gold albums; and

WHEREAS, Three Dog Night's hits have appeared on pop, rock, and country charts, and the group has sold tens of millions of records around the world; in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the group sold more records and more concert tickets than any other band in America; and

WHEREAS, Cory Wells was born Emil Lewandowski to a single mother in Buffalo, New York, and joined the United States Air Force directly out of high school; and

WHEREAS, while in the Air Force, Mr. Wells formed a band of interracial performers inspired by The Del-Vikings; following his military tour of duty, he returned to Buffalo and formed several bands; and

WHEREAS, in the early 1960s, he became the singer of a band named the Vibratos that migrated to California and finally evolved into the Enemys, with which he was performing when he met Danny Hutton; and

WHEREAS, although he devoted most of his life to music and Three Dog Night, Mr. Wells balanced his professional life with family and leisure pursuits; an avid fisherman, he appeared on national television, filming several episodes of *The American Sportsman* in New Zealand and on the Amazon River; and

WHEREAS, he also participated in charity fishing tournaments around the country and enjoyed teaching his grandchildren to fish and enjoy the natural beauty of the Great Lakes and Western New York; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wells is survived by his wife of fifty years, Mary, daughters, Coryann and Dawn Marie, and five grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Cory Wells helped program the soundtrack of many American lives during the 1960s and 1970s, and he will be remembered as a great singer of singular versatility; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Cory Wells, reflecting fondly upon his incredible talent and his exemplary career with Three Dog Night, and extend our condolences to Mr. Wells's family and many friends and fans.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.